The Window

THE NEWSLETTER OF ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH, FREMONT CALIFORNIA

SEPTEMBER 2026

The First Baptismal Vow in Such a Time as This

Bev Mosier

For several months now, some of us have enjoyed the Tuesday evening Zoom class discussing the compelling book *For Such a Time as This: An Emergency Devotional,* by Hanna Reichel. In Part 1 we looked at feelings, discernment, confession, recommitting, and finding purpose. All of these topics looked inward in preparation for discussions about how to reach out.

Only then, in Part 2, did we examine approaches for helping others and working toward genuine justice for all. We focused on the power of language, such as word choices that may convey subtle nuances, both positive and negative, to successfully effect real change. Toward that end, we explored ways to truly protect the vulnerable, effectively stand up for ourselves and others, use our privilege for good, establish the lines we will not cross even in the face of societal or governmental pressure and the potential consequences of that, choose battles, and avoid traps. I believe all of us are coming away with deeper insights into ourselves, as well as valuable lessons about finding strategies for helping others

Even a quick glance at our baptismal vows also gives us the clear message that reaching out to others is vitally important, especially in a time such as this. We are to proclaim the good news of Christ to others with both words and actions, seek and serve Christ in all people, love our neighbors as ourselves, and work diligently for justice and peace. These are promises we have committed to keeping.

But today I would like to look especially at the first baptismal vow, because like Part 1 in Reichel's book, it is the one that prepares us for all the others. The first baptismal vow actually asks four questions:

a. Will you continue in the apostles' teaching?
b. Will you continue in fellowship?
c. Will you continue in the breaking of bread?
d. Will you continue in the prayers?

Notice the word *continue*. This vow, with its four parts, calls for an ongoing focus on refreshing and replenishing ourselves through worship. Not one time and done. It is our ever-deepening connection with God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, as well as with each

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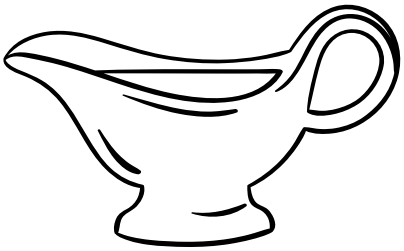
The First Baptismal Vow In Such a Time as This *(continued)*

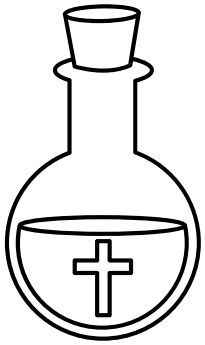
other, through hearing the apostles' teachings, engaging with others, participating in Communion, and praying (communing with the Divine), that keeps us going. Effectively performing the remaining vows, which are focused outward, depends on ongoing inner renewal.

Teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayers are all components of a church service plus coffee hour, church socials, Bible studies, and so on. Immersion in church is a blessing in and of itself. It is also critical to both individual and collective fulfillment of our vows--that is, to building up ourselves first--in preparing to serve. Only then are we ready to take on the energy-intense activities of truly loving our neighbors and seeking justice and peace. Worship, both in private and together, is what keeps us going.

In times such as these, we are called to individually and collectively resist evil and to find ways to support others. But we should never become so consumed with causes that we forget why we are doing it.
At St. Paul's Episcopal Church in The Dalles, OR, above the exit door from the sanctuary to the outside world, are the words, "You are now entering your mission field." The words are not posted outside. You see them only as you are leaving the church after worshipping, soaking up the Word, and breaking bread together.

"I will with God's help" sums it up. We simply cannot be successful for long without God's help. We would burn out and crash. Thus, it is no coincidence that the first baptismal vow comes first.





Vestry Meeting Minutes | AUGUST 2026

Emily Dunn, Junior Warden

The vestry meeting was held on Zoom on August 20 and was called to order at approximately 7:00 p.m.
Matt led the Opening Prayer.

Monthly Business

- Reviewed and approved the July financial reports.
- Accepted the July vestry meeting minutes. Accepted the July staff and ministry reports.

New and Continuing Business

- John reported on the last work party, which was very productive and well attended (15 volunteers), as well as on the good performance of the new lawnmower.
- Toni brought up the possibility of the church hosting an event with a health educator to talk about advanced directives; Bruce recommended adding a session about planned giving presented by the endowment committee; Rev. Lori said she could do a session on planning your funeral.
- Bruce reported that the budget deficit from last month continues, with pledges received so far being much lower than pledges expected. Bruce also reported on the church's banking transfer from Citizens Bank to Fremont Bank, which is nearing completion.
- The vestry approved expenses for the 12-year maintenance for the church's commercial kitchen fire suppression system.
- Lori reminded the vestry of the diocese's anti-racism training, to be completed by each vestry member who has not completed it in the past 3 years.
- The vestry debriefed about St. James' Day, discussed planning for New Member and Volunteer Appreciation Sunday in September, and made plans for stewardship Sunday in November.

Reminders

- Katie's newsletter article for October is due September 20.
- The next vestry meeting will be on September 17 in person.

Toni closed the meeting with Compline.

We Discern Together,
with Gratitude for Lay Discernment Committees

Reverend Lori Walton

One of the great gifts of the Christian life is that we are never meant to walk it alone. From the very beginning, God has called people into community, not simply to worship together, but to help one another listen for God's voice. As Christians, we depend on one another to reflect back to us our truest selves, to notice the gifts we sometimes overlook, and to lovingly ask the questions that help us discover where God is leading. As we celebrated the Feast of St. James' and blessed John Wagas as he leaves for seminary in Austin, Texas, we celebrated more than one person's journey toward ordained ministry. We celebrated the work of a community that has faithfully walked alongside him.

John's lay discernment committee (Bev Mosier, Sylvia Ma, Brian Cochran, and Jim McConnell) has spent many months praying with him, listening deeply, asking thoughtful questions, and helping him discern God's call. Their ministry reminds us that discernment is not about convincing someone to take a particular path. Rather, it is about creating a space where the Holy Spirit can be heard and where God's call can become clearer through prayer, conversation, and faithful companionship. While lay discernment committees are often associated with those exploring Holy Orders, the practice of communal discernment is something every Christian can embrace. Many of us reach moments in life when we sense a persistent tug we cannot quite explain: perhaps a career change, a major purchase, a move, a new ministry, a difficult relationship, or an opportunity that feels both exciting and unsettling. These are often the moments when we need trusted companions most--

not people who will tell us what to do, but people who will pray with us, ask wise questions, and help us notice where God may already be at work.

As we send John on this next step of his journey, we also thank the community that helped him get there. May his story remind all of us that discernment is not reserved for seminarians or clergy. It is part of every Christian life. God often speaks through the people who know us well, love us deeply, and help us become the people we were created to be. If you feel you could benefit from a small group of fellow parishioners to walk with you in discerning a specific decision, please let me know.

Thank you to Bev, Sylvia, Brian, and Jim for the faithful ministry they offered John and, by extension, the entire parish. Thank you to everyone who joined us for our Feast of St. James' celebration, including John's family and friends and members of the Philippine Independent Church. Together, we witnessed the beautiful truth that God's call is best heard in the company of God's people.

Lori+

A New Way to Gather: Coffee Hour Is Changing

Reverend Lori Walton

If you've enjoyed a cup of coffee, a cookie, or a good conversation in the parish hall after worship, you already know that coffee hour is one of the simplest and most meaningful ways we live out fellowship as a community. It's where visitors become friends, where kids quickly eat their snack before taking off for the playground, and where a five-minute "hello" can turn into a much-needed check-in with someone you haven't seen in weeks. Beginning this month, we are refreshing how coffee hour works, and we'd love for everyone to be part of it.

What's Changing

Going forward, coffee hour will run on a "host" model:

- Parishioners will take turns hosting by signing up to bring food to share, anything from homemade treats to store-bought snacks or whatever fits your time and talents.
- Our kitchen crew will focus on setup and cleanup, making sure the coffee is ready and the space is ready before worship ends, and tidying up again afterward.

This shift spreads the joy (and the responsibility) of hospitality across the whole congregation, rather than resting on the shoulders of a few faithful volunteers. It also means more variety, more personal touches, and more chances for each of us to contribute to the welcome we offer one another.

How to Get Involved

Two sign-up sheets are posted in the parish hall:

1. Bring Food - Choose a Sunday to host and share something to eat or drink.
2. Be a Helper - Lend a hand with setup or clean-up, one Sunday a month for a three-month commitment. Many hands make this work light and joyful.

Whether you can commit to hosting once a season or simply want to help wipe down tables for a few Sundays, every bit of participation keeps this ministry thriving. If you sign up, you will get an email reminder on the previous Monday morning. If you bring food, it will be acknowledged in our Thursday email and on Sunday morning.

A Meal in Someone's Honor

Coffee hour food doesn't have to be ordinary. It can be an offering. Consider signing up to host in honor of a birthday, anniversary, baptism, or other special occasion. Or bring a loved one's favorite dish as a way of remembering them, giving thanks for their life, and sharing that memory with the community. These small acts of remembrance and celebration add depth and meaning to our time together.

More Than a Cup of Coffee

The parish hall is more than a place to grab a snack between services. It is a gathering space for fellowship, conversation, and connection. Stop by the puzzle table to add a few pieces, settle in with the coloring sheets, or simply pull up a chair and catch up with a friend. Coffee hour is where our life together as a parish continues to unfold each week, one conversation at a time.

Look for the sign-up sheets in the parish hall, and thank you in advance for helping make coffee hour a welcoming, well-loved tradition for years to come.

UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Healing Prayer and Anointing

A reminder: all are welcome to visit our Healing Station at the 8:00am and 10:30am services on the first Sunday of each month for individual prayer and anointing with blessed oil. Since the earliest days of the Church, Christians have prayed for God's healing, strength, and peace, trusting in Christ's compassionate presence. The anointing with oil is an ancient biblical sign of the Holy Spirit's comfort, healing, and blessing. Whether you seek healing of body, mind, or spirit, or simply desire God's presence in your life, you are invited to come and receive this sacred ministry.

UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Safe Parking Returns to St. James' This October

It's almost time for St. James' to once again host the Safe Parking program. Throughout October, participants will be staying overnight in our parking lot as part of this important ministry. We anticipate that this will be our final hosting month of the year.

We're looking for volunteers to help with participant check-in and check-out. You can sign up here: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1d1fXleQ4w_vuKjPqFDR_tObT-s_90lT0JTAdLDqGpCI/edit?gid=55449474#gid=55449474

If you're new to Safe Parking, don't let that stop you from volunteering! Training is provided, the process is straightforward, and experienced volunteers are happy to help. It's a meaningful way to share your time and offer hospitality to neighbors in our community. While not required, many volunteers also choose to bring coffee, snacks, or even a meal to share during their shift.

For questions, please contact **Charisma Reypan**.

Whether you volunteer, donate, or keep this ministry in your prayers, thank you for supporting this ministry and helping our Safe Parking guests feel welcomed, respected, and cared for.

One of the greatest ongoing needs for those living in their vehicles is fuel. To help, we'll be holding a ***Safe Parking Fundraiser*** *from* ***September 1–20****, with all donations going toward the purchase of Costco gas cards for our participants. If you'd like to contribute, please indicate* ***"Safe Parking"*** *with your donation.*

Men's Group 2026 Weekend Recap

Gregg Feeney

Our group was smaller this year due to family and personal obstacles, but we managed to make the best of it and have a great time. Bob Doherty joined us for the first time, and it was great hearing his stories and having his help with setup and cleanup. Our former St. James' parishioner Frank McNulty traveled all the way from Massachusetts to be with the group.

We had our traditional Thursday dinner at a local pub, The Rock. With our smaller group we kept our activities to a few. Al, Charlie, and Gregg golfed at the local Twain Harte course on Friday, while the rest of the group explored the Sonora Pass on Hwy 108. Bruce took great photos along the way and other attendees shared them with a group text for all to enjoy. They traveled east to Kennedy Meadows and lamented about the scars from the fires of 2007. Many historic buildings were destroyed. Mike, Charlie, Al, and Dave spoke of their backpacking trips to the area with members of St. James' over the last 20-plus years. Bob Doherty mentioned traveling that area with the Boy Scouts.

Saturday morning, Al and Gregg continued with golf in the morning, and then after lunch the whole group traveled to Sonora for a visit to Indigeny Reserve, which is a lush 160-acre preserve and apple ranch in the Sierra Foothills. Mike Dearborn's connection allowed our group to enjoy a nice tasting, and afterward we ended up outside to enjoy the scenery and finish our sampling.

The shared meals were fun to put together with the cooks--Al, Charlie, Dave, and Gregg. The rest of the group set tables and cleaned up. The large deck outside was perfect for our meals, and the new gas fire pit kept us outside late at night telling stories and sharing desserts, along with chocolates thanks to Bob Bynum and Bob Doherty. We raised our glasses in memory of our friend Jim McConnell, who we lost recently. He had been looking forward to the trip.

The date of the next trip will be August 12 – 15, 2027, and it will be announced regularly throughout the year. We may head back to the same house, since it holds 15 maximum, or venture back to Calaveras County to the Arnold area. Our planning committee will also help in recruiting old and new members of St. James' to join our trip.

Left to right: Bob Doherty, Charlie Dickinson, Bob Bynum, Al Casas, Frank McNulty, Bruce Roberts, Mike Dearborn, Gregg Feeney, Dave Nelsen. Pictured: Jim McConnell

CHILDREN & YOUTH MINISTRIES

Sunday School | ***Current Events***

Sunday School, for children in TK through 6th grades, meets weekly during the 10:30am service; all are invited and welcome to join. We gather for a story and talk about the lesson of the week, usually lectionary-based so the whole family will hear the same scripture passages. Afterward, children then return to church in time to join their families for the Liturgy of the Table (also known as the Eucharist or Holy Communion).

Episcopal Youth Fremont

Episcopal Youth Fremont (EYF) is a youth group for those in 6th through 12th grades based at St. James' which meets during the school year. ***Any questions about our programs for children or youth? Email our Children & Youth Minister Jan Scrutton at*** **jan@saintj.com.**

FINANCIAL SUMMARY | JULY 2026

FUND BALANCES	07/2025	07/2026
Operating Fund	63,223.62	50,329.96
Building Fund	111,172.53	100,854.60
Special Interest funds	720,025.72	762,024.13
Pledges Budgeted	218,727.81	255,290.00
Pledges Paid	222,246.71	222,219.59
Unpledged Contributions	13,609.99	22,544.92
Other Operating Income	15,823.01	15,081.45
Total Operating Income	251,679.71	259,845.96
Total Operating Expenses	249,598.98	291,099.64
Income Less Expenses	2,080.73	(31,253.68)

WAYS WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER

LITURGY & WORSHIP

WORSHIP IN PERSON AT CHURCH

We offer two services on Sunday morning, at 8:00am and 10:30am. Coffee and light snacks follow each service. Join us for worship and fellowship!

SUNDAY WORSHIP LIVESTREAM

If you cannot attend church in person, you can join our 10:30am service live-streamed on Sundays at **saintj.com**, our parish website. The service can be joined at any time on Sunday from 10:30am or watched during the week online through our **YouTube channel**.

WEDNESDAY 10:00AM SERVICE

Celebrate the Liturgy of the Word with prayers and sermon discussion in real time through Zoom on Wednesday mornings. The link can be found under "Upcoming Events" on the right side of our **website**.

Follow us on Social Media!

FACEBOOK INSTAGRAM

Find service & sermon audio/video recordings:

YOUTUBE APPLE SPOTIFY TUNEIN

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

SCRIPTURE / BIBLE STUDIES

Monday | 11:00am on Zoom

Join with others to catch up and wrestle with some of the sacred texts of the Bible. We meet every Monday on Zoom. ***Email Rev. Lori at lori@saintj.com for the Zoom link or find more info on our website***.

Wednesday | 11:00am on Zoom

Join us for Bible Study facilitated by Rev. Lori. Each week we discuss scripture, engaging in various media such as art, video, and text. ***Email Rev. Lori with questions or find the Zoom link on our website.***

COMMUNITY FELLOWSHIP

SUNDAY COFFEE HOUR

Join us for light refreshments and conversation after each service on Sunday mornings in the Parish Hall.

HEALTH & WELLNESS

MORNING CHAIR EXERCISE

Tuesdays on Zoom | 10am – 11am

Join our weekly class of chair exercises on Breathing (Qi Gong) and Tai Chi (Hsing I). ***Email Sylvia Ma at hsiehtinghsueh@outlook.com for the Zoom link.***

SEPTEMBER PRAYER LIST

For Those in the Military

Matthew, Luis, Laura, Dwight, Nick

For Those Who Need Healing & Comfort

Julie, Linda, David, Elaine, Margaret, John, Karen, Barbara, Nova, Heidi, Maurice, Charlie, Marilyn, Amy, Carolyn, Luann

For Those Who Need Solace, Strength, & Guidance

David, Derek, the Gomez family, Martha, the Bourne family, Karen & family, Claudia, Sally, Cat, Rod

For Those Who Have Passed Away

Jim, Miriam

To add someone to the "Special Prayers" list, please call or email the parish office.

The list is found in our weekly emails and monthly newsletter. After six weeks, names are removed. Please renew your request(s) as needed.

BLESSING BAGS & DISTRIBUTION

Each bag contains toiletries, water, food, socks, a blanket, and a mask. We're using reusable cloth bags that double as backpacks. ***We are not taking donations other than monetary donations.*** This allows us to purchase what we need and to be consistent. Blessing Bags are available to pick up during parish office hours (Wed/Thurs, 10am-1pm).

It is helpful to have gift cards to give with the bags when appropriate. If you'd like to donate a gift card, we ask for $25 cards for gas, Safeway, Target, Walmart, or Lucky. They can be given to the wardens (vestry) or clergy.

ACCESS TO ZOOM LINKS

Zoom links for all of our offerings can be found on our parish website, **saintj.com**; look for the calendar on our home page. If something is not listed, email the gathering/event leader.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

The Newsletter Team welcomes your essays, poems, photos, reviews, and news. ***Email your submission to newsletter@saintj.com by the 20th of the month*** to ensure it's included.

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OFFICE HOURS *Wednesdays and Thursdays, 10am – 1pm*

CLERGY AND STAFF

The Rev. Lori Walton, *Rector*.....**lori@saintj.com**
The Rev. Ingrid Jacobson, *Associate Rector*.....**ingrid@saintj.com**
Jan Scrutton, *Children and Youth Minister*.....**jan@saintj.com**
Jennifer Ravera, *Music Director*.....**music@saintj.com**
Ron Cook, *Office Administrator*.....**admin@saintj.com**
Bruce Roberts, *Treasurer*.....**treasurer@saintj.com**

VESTRY MEMBERS

Senior Warden
John Amouroux | srwarden@saintj.com

Junior Warden
Emily Dunn | jrwarden@saintj.com

Gregg Feeney
Burtin Hart
Matt Hurley
Kaethe Langs
Paula McKinney
Bev Mosier
Katie Porter
Jasmine Reypan
Toni Shellen
Scott Whitaker

Vestry Clerk **Elizabeth Hart**

CONVENTION DELEGATES

Bev Mosier
Mike Scrutton
Ken Trant
Isaiah Zachariah

Contact: **stjdeanery@saintj.com**

WORSHIP TIMES

Sunday Services
In-Person | 8:00am and 10:30am

Live-streamed | 10:30am with recording

Wednesday Service
Online/Zoom | 10:00am (Ante-Communion)

MAIN COORDINATORS

Eucharistic Ministers & Lectors
George Siegmann

Eucharistic Visitors
The Rev. Ingrid Jacobson

Ushers
Burtin Hart

Facilities ***facilities@saintj.com***

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